AN APPLE FROM ST. PETERSBURG

[Original.]

Before leaving St. Petersburg immediately after the great January massacre I called on the American minister, whom I knew, and he asked me to carry dispatches to Washington, whither I was going. I accepted the commission and left on the night train. It was overloaded with people aiming to escape the terrible events transpiring in the capital. A railroad official tapped me on the shoulder and offered to show me to a seat. He took me to a car where there was room for but one person, put me in, shut the door and was off before I could fee him. This astonished me, for I had supposed a fee was the object of his attention.

At every station on the route one or more of the passengers in my compartment got out till at last there was but one left, a young girl. I had settled myself for a nap, but was still half awake, when I was conscious that this girl was rummaging my satchel. I was about to start up to prevent her when curiosity changed my intention, and I feigned to be sound asleep. The girl found my passport and seized upon it eagerly, evidently much relieved to find it in the satchel. Then she threw off a mackintosh, took a soft hat out of her pocket and appeared as a man. Rolling her castoff clothing in a bundle, she lowered the window and threw it out.

It was not long after this that the train stopped, the door opened and an officer put in his head and called for passports. It was a critical moment with the girl, and she turned pale as death. Opening my satchel, I hunted for what I knew she had taken and, not finding it, endeavored to explain to the officer that I had left it behind. Meanwhile the girl had produced it. The officer was sufficiently absorbed in my case to hand it back to her with but a hasty examination.

"Your passport!" he demanded of me severely.

"I think I can satisfy you," I said, and, taking the envelope bearing my dispatches addressed to the secretary of state at Washington, also the seal of the American embassy, I showed it to him. After some words he agreed to telegraph to St. Petersburg for instructions, which should arrive before we reached the frontier. Then he locked the door and in a few minutes the train started on.

I expected the girl would thank me for what I had done, but I had played my part so well that she really believed I thought I had left my passport behind. Presently I said to her in French:

"Mademoiselle, you will pass the border safely. I shall probably be detained. May I ask that you will wait for me at—well, suppose I meet you at Bromberg for return of my passport?"

Without a word she came over to where I sat, knelt before me and kissed my hand.

"Monsieur, you have saved me from death or worse than death—Siberia."

"You are very fortunate in availing yourself of my passport."

"It is not luck. A clerk in the American embassy informed our club that you were to depart tonight. You were shown into this compartment by a railway official who is also a member of the club. The compartment was filled with other members of the club to prevent any one else from riding in it. The plan was laid for me, in the hope that I might steal your passport. Had I not found it in your satchel I should have drugged you."

"Why are you leaving Russia?"

"Just now it would not be best to tell you."

"You are right. I would rather not know."

When we reached the frontier the train stopped, and the officer appeared and said that he had received a telegram that at the request of the American minister I was to be permitted to go on without a passport. As soon as he had withdrawn I looked at the girl. She had fainted. I revived her with a draft from my flask.

We had not gone far beyond the border when from under a shawl on the seat behind her she produced an apple, lowered the window and was about to throw the apple out when I stopped her.

"I think I deserve your confidence," I said. "What does this mean?"

"I must get rid of it," she gasped, looking at me appealingly. "It is a bomb!"

Taking it from her, I hurled it with all my strength into a field. There was an explosion. The train came to a stop, and every head was thrust out of the windows. After examination, the officials, finding that no injury had resulted, started the train.

Arriving at Berlin, the girl gave me her address on my promise not to reveal it, and the next morning I called on her. She confessed the reason for her sudden departure from Russia.

"I was deputed by our club," she said, "to kill that terrible man, the Grand Duke Vladimir. I am the daughter of a noble, a high official in the government, and have access to all except the emperor. The day I left St. Petersburg I had offered a basket of fruit to the grand duke containing two apples, both of which were merely apple skins filled with a glass bulb, the bulb filled with an explosive. He chose one of the apples, and I brought away the other. The one he took he laid on his desk. An hour later I heard that there had been an explosion in his office, but he was not injured. My plan had failed.

"But I am only the first link in the chain," she added. "There are many others. It will be accomplished yet."

She offered to return my passport, but I contributed it to the cause of Russian freedom.

W. LEROY WISE.

A Matter of Clothes

[Original.]

Colonel Browning of the the United States infantry never wore a uniform when off duty, always wearing the plainest clothes. When he was a young lieutenant he had been noticeable for always dressing when in mufti in the most fashionable attire. But suddenly there had come a change. His fine clothes were replaced by those of the most ordinary type, and from that time forward he never again dressed as a "swell."

One evening when a number of retired officers at the Army and Navy club were sitting together one of them who had known him all his life remarked on the splendor of his former apparel and the sudden change, whereupon Browning told the following story:

Some forty years ago a gentleman stepped into a dance house at a point on the upper Missouri river where wagons started for the interior. The gentleman could not have been more inappropriately dressed if he had attended an inauguration ball in a woolen shirt, with his trousers tucked into his boots. It was a case of vice versa. The people in the dance house were teamsters, gamblers, thieves, cutthroats; the women, the lowest of the lowest class. The gentleman went among them dressed in the height of fashion. True, he wore what are called business clothes, but from their cut and texture among the costumes in the dance house they were as noticeable as if he had been got up to represent a rajah of India.

The gentleman stood looking on at the motley crowd dancing about to the music of a scraped fiddle, and, being nearsighted, slipped a pair of pince nez glasses before his eyes in order the better to take in the novel sight. He had never before seen men dancing with their hats on nor men and women pausing to walk up to the bar to have a drink together. And it is questionable if the dancers ever saw such a "swell" looking young fellow in a sky blue cravat spangled with white dots looking at them through a pair of eyeglasses without the slightest attempt to conceal his interest in their dress, manners and customs.

Very soon he was made aware of the fact that the people he considered so curious had feelings as well as himself, though not as delicate methods of showing them. There were cries of "Bloke!" "Tenderfoot!" "Dude!" and such like appellations, and presently the gentleman became aware that they were applied to him. He was about to turn and leave when a man stepped up to him and, shoving a revolver under his nose, said:

"Stranger, we consider ourselves wo'th a drink all round."

By this time the gentleman remembered that he had heard of such people as these and when they made a request of a man in their power it must be obeyed.

"All right," he said. "Step up!"

The man who had made the request shouted that the stranger would set up the drinks, and every one present drank. The stranger joined, realizing that if he did not he would very likely never drink again. Then he paid the price, which used up a twenty dollar bill, and was about to depart when the man who had forced the invitation said to him:

"Now you"—here followed language not to be repeated—"git!"

The gentleman had not been unwilling to pay for the show he had enjoyed, though under compulsion, but at this point he demurred. Nevertheless he bowed politely to the man and remarked that he was sorry to have intruded. Then he departed, walking briskly down to the river bank, where he found a boat tied up, on which were some twenty recruits for the —th United States infantry stationed at Fort —.

They and the gentleman had arrived only a couple of hours before and were to proceed in the morning to the fort.

"Sergeant," said the gentleman, "get your men ashore and follow me."

The order was obeyed, and in a few minutes the men with arms at right shoulder were marching up the roadway—it couldn't be called a street—the gentleman leading the way. When they reached the dance house they filed in and were drawn up in line before the only door. The gentleman then brought them to an "alm" and remarked to the assembly:

"Every man on his head."

One or two who saw blood in his eye obeyed instantly, but it was some minutes before all followed.

"Turn somersaults."

Every man obeyed the order. Then the gentleman directed the man who had insulted him to get up on a table and dance. When the sport became tiresome the manager of the show turned the men over to the sergeant and ordered him to march them back to the boat.

Who was the gentleman? Second Lieutenant Ned Browning—in other words, myself. I had brought the recruits up the river and on the evening of our arrival had fallen into the water and barely escaped drowning. I had no change of uniform, but I did have a suit of "cit's" clothes. After a rubbing I put them on and, having nothing better to do, thought I would go up and see something of frontier life. I saw more than I had bargained for.

That episode taught me a lesson. The wearing of anything to attract attention, whether from its peculiarity or from contrast, is more likely to harm than benefit the wearer. Since that episode I have had a distaste to wearing any except ordinary clothing or clothing unbefitting my surroundings. I would at any time rather be underdressed than overdressed. LENA M. BROOKS

A few counterfeiters have lately been making and trying to sell imitations of Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, Coughs and Colds and other medicines, thereby defrauding the public. This is to warn you to beware of such people, who seek to profit through stealing the reputation of remedies which have been successfully curing diseases for over 35 years. A sure protection to you is our name on the wrapper. Look for it on all Dr. King's or Bucklen's remedies, as all others are mere imitations. H. E. BUCKLEN & CO., Chicago, Ill., and Windsor, Canada.